

CHAPTER 3

PRESCRIPTIVE COMPLIANCE METHOD

[B] SECTION 301 GENERAL

301.1 Scope. The provisions of this chapter shall apply to the alteration, repair, addition and change of occupancy of existing structures, including historic and moved structures, as referenced in Section 101.5.1.

Exception: Existing bleachers, grandstands and folding and telescopic seating shall comply with ICC 300-02.

301.1.1 Compliance with other methods. Alterations, repairs, additions and changes of occupancy to existing structures shall comply with the provisions of this chapter or with one of the methods provided in Section 101.5.

SECTION 302 ADDITIONS, ALTERATIONS OR REPAIRS

[B] 302.1 Existing buildings or structures. Additions or alterations to any building or structure shall comply with the requirements of the *Florida Building Code, Building* for new construction. Additions or alterations shall not be made to an existing building or structure that will cause the existing building or structure to be in violation of any provisions of the *Florida Building Code, Building*. An existing building plus additions shall comply with the height and area provisions of the *Florida Building Code, Building*. Portions of the structure not altered and not affected by the alteration are not required to comply with the code requirements for a new structure.

[B] 302.1.1 Flood hazard areas. For buildings and structures in flood hazard areas established in Section 1612.3 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*, any additions, alterations or repairs that constitute substantial improvement of the existing structure, as defined in Section 1612.2 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*, shall comply with the flood design requirements for new construction and all aspects of the existing structure shall be brought into compliance with the requirements for new construction for flood design.

[B] 302.2 Structural. Additions or alterations to an existing structure shall not increase the force in any structural element by more than 5 percent (unless the increased forces on the element are still in compliance with the code for new structures), nor shall the strength of any structural element be decreased to less than that required by the *Florida Building Code, Building* for new structures. Where repairs are made to structural elements of an existing building and uncovered structural elements are found to be unsound or otherwise structurally deficient, such elements shall be made to conform to the requirements for new structures.

[B] 302.2.1 Existing live load. Where an existing structure heretofore is altered or repaired, the minimum design loads for the structure shall be the loads applicable at the time of

erection, provided that public safety is not endangered thereby.

[B] 302.2.2 Live load reduction. If the approved live load is less than required by Section 1607 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*, the areas designed for the reduced live load shall be posted in with the approved load. Placards shall be of an approved design.

302.2.3 Seismic. Additions, alterations or modification or change of occupancy of existing buildings shall be in accordance with this section for the purposes of seismic considerations.

302.2.3.1 Additions to existing buildings. An addition that is structurally independent from an existing structure shall be designed and constructed with the seismic requirements for new structures. An addition that is not structurally independent from an existing structure shall be designed and constructed such that the entire structure conforms to the seismic-force-resistance requirements for new structures unless the following conditions are satisfied:

1. The addition conforms with the requirements for new structures;
2. The addition does not increase the seismic forces in any structural element of the existing structure by more than 10 percent cumulative since the original construction, unless the element has the capacity to resist the increased forces determined in accordance with ASCE 7; and
3. Additions do not decrease the seismic resistance of any structural element of the existing structure by more than 10 percent cumulative since the original construction, unless the element has the capacity to resist the forces determined in accordance with ASCE 7. If the building's seismic base shear capacity has been increased since the original construction, the percent change in base shear may be calculated relative to the increased value.

302.2.3.2 Alterations. Alterations are permitted to be made to any structure without requiring the structure to comply with Section 1613 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*, provided the alterations conform to the requirements for a new structure. Alterations that increase the seismic force in any existing structural element by more than 10 percent cumulative since the original construction or decrease the design strength of any existing structural element to resist seismic forces by more than 5 percent cumulative since the original construction shall not be permitted unless the entire seismic-force-resisting system is determined to conform to ASCE 7 for a new structure. If the building's seismic base shear capacity has been increased since the original

construction, the percent change in base shear may be calculated relative to the increased value.

Exception: Alterations to existing structural elements or additions of new structural elements that are not required by ASCE 7 and are initiated for the purpose of increasing the strength or stiffness of the seismic-force-resisting system of an existing structure need not be designed for forces conforming to ASCE 7, provided that an engineering analysis is submitted indicating the following:

1. The design strength of existing structural elements required to resist seismic forces is not reduced.
2. The seismic force to required existing structural elements is not increased beyond their design strength.
3. New structural elements are detailed and connected to the existing structural elements as required by Chapter 16 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*.
4. New or relocated nonstructural elements are detailed and connected to existing or new structural elements as required by Chapter 16 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*.
5. The alterations do not create a structural irregularity as defined in ASCE 7 or make an existing structural irregularity more severe.
6. The alterations do not result in the creation of an unsafe condition.

[B] 302.2.4 Alterations to trusses. Truss members and components shall not be cut, notched, drilled, spliced or otherwise altered in any way without written concurrence and approval of a registered design professional. Alterations resulting in the addition of loads to any member (e.g., HVAC equipment, water heater) shall not be permitted without verification that the truss is capable of supporting such additional loading.

[B] 302.2.5 Structural safety due to system installations. The building shall not be weakened by the installation of any electrical, fuel gas, mechanical or plumbing system. In the process of installing or repairing any such system, the finished floors, walls, ceilings, tile work or any other part of the building or premises that is required to be changed or replaced shall be left in a safe structural condition in accordance with the requirements of the *Florida Building Code, Building*.

[B] 302.3 Nonstructural. Nonstructural alterations or repairs to an existing building or structure are permitted to be made of the same materials of which the building or structure is constructed, provided that they do not adversely affect any structural member or the fire-resistance rating of any part of the building or structure.

[B] 302.4 Stairways. An alteration or the replacement of an existing stairway in an existing structure shall not be required to comply with the requirements of a new stairway as outlined in Section 1009 of the *Florida Building Code, Building* where

the existing space and construction will not allow a reduction in pitch or slope.

302.5 Energy. Additions, alterations, renovations or repairs to an existing building, building system or portion thereof shall conform to the provisions of this code as they relate to new construction without requiring the unaltered portion(s) of the existing building or building system to comply with this code. Additions, alterations, renovations or repairs shall not create an unsafe or hazardous condition or overload existing building systems.

Exceptions: The following need not comply, provided the energy use of the building is not increased:

1. Storm windows installed over existing fenestration.
2. Glass only replacements in an existing sash and frame.
3. Existing ceiling, wall or floor cavities exposed during construction provided that these cavities are filled with insulation.
4. Construction where the existing roof, wall or floor cavity is not exposed.

302.6 Electrical. Additions, alterations, renovations or repairs to electrical installations shall conform to Chapter 27 of the *Florida Building Code, Building* without requiring the existing installation to comply with all of the requirements of this code. Additions, alterations or repairs shall not cause an existing installation to become unsafe, hazardous or overloaded.

Minor additions, alterations, renovations and repairs to existing installations shall meet the provisions for new construction, unless such work is done in the same manner and arrangement as was in the existing system, is not hazardous and is approved.

[FG] 302.7 Fuel gas. Additions, alterations, renovations or repairs to fuel gas installations shall conform to the *Florida Building Code, Fuel Gas* without requiring the existing installation to comply with all of the requirements of this code. Additions, alterations or repairs shall not cause an existing installation to become unsafe, hazardous or overloaded.

Minor additions, alterations, renovations and repairs to existing installations shall meet the provisions for new construction, unless such work is done in the same manner and arrangement as was in the existing system, is not hazardous and is approved.

[M] 302.8 Mechanical. Additions, alterations, renovations or repairs to mechanical installations shall conform to the *Florida Building Code, Mechanical* without requiring the existing installation to comply with all of the requirements of this code. Additions, alterations or repairs shall not cause an existing installation to become unsafe, hazardous or overloaded.

Minor additions, alterations, renovations and repairs to existing installations shall meet the provisions for new construction, unless such work is done in the same manner and arrangement as was in the existing system, is not hazardous and is approved.

[P] 302.9 Plumbing. Additions, alterations, renovations or repairs to plumbing installations shall conform to the *Florida Building Code, Plumbing* without requiring the existing installation to comply with all of the requirements of this code. Additions, alterations or repairs shall not cause an existing installation to become unsafe, hazardous or overloaded.

Minor additions, alterations, renovations and repairs to existing installations shall meet the provisions for new construction, unless such work is done in the same manner and arrangement as was in the existing system, is not hazardous and is approved.

**[B] SECTION 303
FIRE ESCAPES**

303.1 Where permitted. Fire escapes shall be permitted only as provided for in Sections 303.1.1 through 303.1.4.

303.1.1 New buildings. Fire escapes shall not constitute any part of the required means of egress in new buildings.

303.1.2 Existing fire escapes. Existing fire escapes shall be continued to be accepted as a component in the means of egress in existing buildings only.

303.1.3 New fire escapes. New fire escapes for existing buildings shall be permitted only where exterior stairs cannot be utilized due to lot lines limiting stair size or due to the sidewalks, alleys or roads at grade level. New fire escapes shall not incorporate ladders or access by windows.

303.1.4 Limitations. Fire escapes shall comply with this section and shall not constitute more than 50 percent of the required number of exits nor more than 50 percent of the required exit capacity.

303.2 Location. Where located on the front of the building and where projecting beyond the building line, the lowest landing shall not be less than 7 feet (2134 mm) or more than 12 feet (3658 mm) above grade, and shall be equipped with a counter-balanced stairway to the street. In alleyways and thoroughfares less than 30 feet (9144 mm) wide, the clearance under the lowest landing shall not be less than 12 feet (3658 mm).

303.3 Construction. The fire escape shall be designed to support a live load of 100 pounds per square foot (4788 Pa) and shall be constructed of steel or other approved noncombustible materials. Fire escapes constructed of wood not less than nominal 2 inches (51 mm) thick are permitted on buildings of Type V construction. Walkways and railings located over or supported by combustible roofs in buildings of Type III and IV construction are permitted to be of wood not less than nominal 2 inches (51 mm) thick.

303.4 Dimensions. Stairs shall be at least 22 inches (559 mm) wide with risers not more than, and treads not less than, 8 inches (203 mm) and landings at the foot of stairs not less than 40 inches (1016 mm) wide by 36 inches (914 mm) long, located not more than 8 inches (203 mm) below the door.

303.5 Opening protectives. Doors and windows along the fire escape shall be protected with ³/₄-hour opening protectives.

**[B] SECTION 304
GLASS REPLACEMENT**

304.1 Conformance. The installation or replacement of glass shall be as required for new installations.

**SECTION 305
CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY**

[B] 305.1 Conformance. No change shall be made in the use or occupancy of any building that would place the building in a different division of the same group of occupancy or in a different group of occupancies, unless such building is made to comply with the requirements of the *Florida Building Code, Building* for such division or group of occupancy. Subject to the approval of the building official, the use or occupancy of existing buildings shall be permitted to be changed and the building is allowed to be occupied for purposes in other groups without conforming to all the requirements of the *Florida Building Code, Building* for those groups, provided the new or proposed use is less hazardous, based on life and fire risk, than the existing use.

[B] 305.2 Certificate of occupancy. A certificate of occupancy shall be issued where it has been determined that the requirements for the new occupancy classification have been met.

[B] 305.3 Stairways. Existing stairways in an existing structure shall not be required to comply with the requirements of a new stairway as outlined in Section 1009 of the *Florida Building Code, Building* where the existing space and construction will not allow a reduction in pitch or slope.

305.4 Structural. When a change of occupancy results in a structure being reclassified to a higher occupancy category, the structure shall conform to the seismic requirements for a new structure.

Exceptions:

1. Specific seismic detailing requirements of this code or ASCE 7 for a new structure shall not be required to be met where it can be shown that the level of performance and seismic safety is equivalent to that of a new structure. Such analysis shall consider the regularity, overstrength, redundancy and ductility of the structure within the context of the existing and retrofit (if any) detailing provided.
2. When a change of use results in a structure being reclassified from Occupancy Category I or II to Occupancy Category III and the structure is located in a seismic map area where $S_{DS} < 0.33$, compliance with the seismic requirements of this code and ASCE 7 are not required.

305.5 Energy. Buildings undergoing a change in occupancy that would result in an increase in demand for either fossil fuel or electrical energy shall comply with Chapter 13 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*.

305.6 Electrical. It shall be unlawful to make a change in the occupancy of a structure that will subject the structure to the special provisions of Chapter 27 of the *Florida Building Code, Building* applicable to the new occupancy without approval.

The code official shall certify that the structure meets the intent of the provisions of law governing building construction for the proposed new occupancy and that such change of occupancy does not result in any hazard to the public health, safety or welfare.

[FG] 305.7 Fuel gas. It shall be unlawful to make a change in the occupancy of a structure that will subject the structure to the special provisions of the *Florida Building Code, Fuel Gas* applicable to the new occupancy without approval. The code official shall certify that the structure meets the intent of the provisions of law governing building construction for the proposed new occupancy and that such change of occupancy does not result in any hazard to the public health, safety or welfare.

[M] 305.8 Mechanical. It shall be unlawful to make a change in the occupancy of a structure that will subject the structure to the special provisions of the *Florida Building Code, Mechanical* applicable to the new occupancy without approval. The code official shall certify that the structure meets the intent of the provisions of law governing building construction for the proposed new occupancy and that such change of occupancy does not result in any hazard to the public health, safety or welfare.

[P] 305.9 Plumbing. It shall be unlawful to make a change in the occupancy of a structure that will subject the structure to the special provisions of the *Florida Building Code, Plumbing* applicable to the new occupancy without approval. The code official shall certify that the structure meets the intent of the provisions of law governing building construction for the proposed new occupancy and that such change of occupancy does not result in any hazard to the public health, safety or welfare.

**[B] SECTION 306
HISTORIC BUILDINGS**

306.1 Historic buildings. The provisions of this chapter relating to the construction, repair, alteration, addition, restoration and movement of structures and change of occupancy shall not be mandatory for historic buildings where such buildings are judged by the code official to not constitute a distinct life safety hazard.

306.2 Flood hazard areas. Within flood hazard areas established in accordance with Section 1612.3 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*, where the work proposed constitutes substantial improvement as defined in Section 1612.2 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*, the building shall be brought into conformance with Section 1612 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*.

Exception: Historic buildings that are:

1. Listed or preliminarily determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places; or
2. Determined by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior as contributing to the historical significance of a registered historic district or a district preliminarily determined to qualify as an historic district; or

3. Designated as historic under a state or local historic preservation program that is approved by the Department of the Interior.

**[B] SECTION 307
MOVED STRUCTURES**

307.1 Conformance. Structures moved into or within the jurisdiction shall comply with the provisions of the *Florida Building Code, Building* for new structures.

**[B] SECTION 308
ACCESSIBILITY FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS**

308.1 Scope. The provisions of Sections 308.1 through 308.9 apply to maintenance, change of occupancy, additions and alterations to existing buildings, including those identified as historic buildings.

Exception: Type B dwelling or sleeping units required by Section 1107 of the *Florida Building Code, Building* are not required to be provided in existing buildings and facilities.

308.2 Maintenance of facilities. A building, facility or element that is constructed or altered to be accessible shall be maintained accessible during occupancy.

308.3 Extent of application. An alteration of an existing element, space or area of a building or facility shall not impose a requirement for greater accessibility than that which would be required for new construction.

Alterations shall not reduce or have the effect of reducing accessibility of a building, portion of a building or facility.

308.4 Change of occupancy. Existing buildings or portions thereof that undergo a change of group or occupancy shall have all of the following accessible features:

1. At least one accessible building entrance.
2. At least one accessible route from an accessible building entrance to primary function areas.
3. Signage complying with Section 1110 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*.
4. Accessible parking, where parking is being provided.
5. At least one accessible passenger loading zone, when loading zones are provided.
6. At least one accessible route connecting accessible parking and accessible passenger loading zones to an accessible entrance.

Where it is technically infeasible to comply with the new construction standards for any of these requirements for a change of group or occupancy, the above items shall conform to the requirements to the maximum extent that is technically feasible. Change of group or occupancy that incorporates any alterations or additions shall comply with this section and Sections 308.5, 308.6, 308.7 and 308.8.

308.5 Additions. Provisions for new construction shall apply to additions. An addition that affects the accessibility to a, or contains an area of, primary function shall comply with the requirements in Section 308.7.

308.6 Alterations. A building, facility or element that is altered shall comply with the applicable provisions in Chapter 11 of the *Florida Building Code, Building* and ICC A117.1, unless technically infeasible. Where compliance with this section is technically infeasible, the alteration shall provide access to the maximum extent that is technically feasible.

Exceptions:

1. The altered element or space is not required to be on an accessible route, unless required by Section 308.7.
2. Accessible means of egress required by Chapter 10 of the *Florida Building Code, Building* are not required to be provided in existing buildings and facilities.
3. The alteration to Type A individually owned dwelling units within a Group R-2 occupancy shall meet the provision for a Type B dwelling unit and shall comply with the applicable provisions in Chapter 11 of the *Florida Building Code, Building* and ICC/ANSI A117.1.

308.7 Alterations affecting an area containing a primary function. Where an alteration affects the accessibility to a, or contains an area of, primary function, the route to the primary function area shall be accessible. The accessible route to the primary function area shall include toilet facilities or drinking fountains serving the area of primary function.

Exceptions:

1. The costs of providing the accessible route are not required to exceed 20 percent of the costs of the alterations affecting the area of primary function.
2. This provision does not apply to alterations limited solely to windows, hardware, operating controls, electrical outlets and signs.
3. This provision does not apply to alterations limited solely to mechanical systems, electrical systems, installation or alteration of fire protection systems and abatement of hazardous materials.
4. This provision does not apply to alterations undertaken for the primary purpose of increasing the accessibility of an existing building, facility or element.

308.8 Scoping for alterations. The provisions of Sections 308.8.1 through 308.8.12 shall apply to alterations to existing buildings and facilities.

308.8.1 Entrances. Accessible entrances shall be provided in accordance with Section 1105 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*.

Exception: Where an alteration includes alterations to an entrance, and the building or facility has an accessible entrance, the altered entrance is not required to be accessible, unless required by Section 308.7. Signs complying with Section 1110 of the *Florida Building Code, Building* shall be provided.

308.8.2 Elevators. Altered elements of existing elevators shall comply with ASME A17.1 and ICC A117.1. Such elements shall also be altered in elevators programmed to respond to the same hall call control as the altered elevator.

308.8.3 Platform lifts. Platform (wheelchair) lifts complying with ICC A117.1 and installed in accordance with ASME A18.1 shall be permitted as a component of an accessible route.

308.8.4 Stairs and escalators in existing buildings. In alterations where an escalator or stair is added where none existed previously, an accessible route shall be provided in accordance with Sections 1104.4 and 1104.5 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*.

308.8.5 Ramps. Where steeper slopes than allowed by Section 1010.2 of the *Florida Building Code, Building* are necessitated by space limitations, the slope of ramps in or providing access to existing buildings or facilities shall comply with Table 308.8.5.

**TABLE 308.8.5
RAMPS**

SLOPE	MAXIMUM RISE
Steeper than 1:10 but not steeper than 1:8	3 inches
Steeper than 1:12 but not steeper than 1:10	6 inches

For SI: 1 inch = 25.4 mm.

308.8.6 Performance areas. Where it is technically infeasible to alter performance areas to be on an accessible route, at least one of each type of performance area shall be made accessible.

308.8.7 Dwelling or sleeping units. Where Group I-1, I-2, I-3, R-1, R-2 or R-4 dwelling or sleeping units are being altered or added, the requirements of Section 1107 of the *Florida Building Code, Building* for Accessible or Type A units and Chapter 9 of the *Florida Building Code, Building* for accessible alarms apply only to the quantity of spaces being altered or added.

308.8.8 Jury boxes and witness stands. In alterations, accessible wheelchair spaces are not required to be located within the defined area of raised jury boxes or witness stands and shall be permitted to be located outside these spaces where the ramp or lift access restricts or projects into the means of egress.

308.8.9 Toilet rooms. Where it is technically infeasible to alter existing toilet and bathing facilities to be accessible, an accessible unisex toilet or bathing facility is permitted. The unisex facility shall be located on the same floor and in the same area as the existing facilities.

308.8.10 Dressing, fitting and locker rooms. Where it is technically infeasible to provide accessible dressing, fitting or locker rooms at the same location as similar types of rooms, one accessible room on the same level shall be provided. Where separate-sex facilities are provided, accessible rooms for each sex shall be provided. Separate-sex facilities are not required where only unisex rooms are provided.

308.8.11 Check-out aisles. Where check-out aisles are altered, at least one of each check-out aisle serving each function shall be made accessible until the number of accessible check-out aisles complies with Section 1109.12.2 of the *Florida Building Code, Building*.

308.8.12 Thresholds. The maximum height of thresholds at doorways shall be $\frac{3}{4}$ inch (19.1 mm). Such thresholds shall have beveled edges on each side.

308.9 Historic buildings. These provisions shall apply to buildings and facilities designated as historic structures that undergo alterations or a change of occupancy, unless technically infeasible. Where compliance with the requirements for accessible routes, ramps, entrances or toilet facilities would threaten or destroy the historic significance of the building or facility, as determined by the authority having jurisdiction, the alternative requirements of Sections 308.9.1 through 308.9.4 for that element shall be permitted.

308.9.1 Site arrival points. At least one accessible route from a site arrival point to an accessible entrance shall be provided.

308.9.2 Multilevel buildings and facilities. An accessible route from an accessible entrance to public spaces on the level of the accessible entrance shall be provided.

308.9.3 Entrances. At least one main entrance shall be accessible.

Exceptions:

1. If a main entrance cannot be made accessible, an accessible nonpublic entrance that is unlocked while the building is occupied shall be provided; or
2. If a main entrance cannot be made accessible, a locked accessible entrance with a notification system or remote monitoring shall be provided.

Signs complying with Section 1110 of the *Florida Building Code, Building* shall be provided at the primary entrance and the accessible entrance.

308.9.4 Toilet and bathing facilities. Where toilet rooms are provided, at least one accessible toilet room complying with Section 1109.2.1 of the *Florida Building Code, Building* shall be provided.

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